

Nevada Department of Agriculture News Release



**For Immediate Release
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Nevada's First West Nile Virus Positive of Season

Reno, July 20, 2005 – A dead American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) submitted to the Nevada Department of Agriculture's Animal Disease and Food Safety Laboratory for testing has proven positive for West Nile Virus.

The bird was found dead in Yerington on Monday and collected by an employee of the Mason Valley Mosquito Abatement District. A swab was taken from the bird's oral cavity and sent in to the lab.

"We have tested over 1500 mosquito pools, 40 dead birds, and 36 horse samples this season and it's our first positive for WNV," said Dr. Anette Rink, supervisor of NDOA's Animal Disease Lab (ADL). Two mosquito pools sent in earlier tested positive for St. Louis Encephalitis.

"We appreciate the public helping with surveillance on dead birds this year," said Ed Foster, NDOA spokesperson. "Please check our website (www.agri.nv.gov) for WNV updates throughout the season," Foster added.

"The bottom line is, the West Nile Virus is in Nevada," said Dr. Bradford Lee, State Health Officer. "Everyone needs to practice preventive measures such as, when outdoors, use insect repellent containing DEET, wear pants, long-sleeve shirts and socks, remove standing water from around your house and make sure the screens on your doors and windows fit properly. People 50 years of age or older are more likely to develop serious symptoms of West Nile Virus and should take special care to avoid mosquito bites."

Dr. David Thain, Nevada State Veterinarian adds, "It is imperative that horse owners have their animals vaccinated for WNV as well."

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